

Oral history transcription  
**Georgetta Drago Myler**  
Recorded 3/24/97 by Evelyn McClure

E: Did you know your grandparents? (the Drago's)

G: No. I was born in 1917 so I didn't know them.

E: Do you remember what your parents told you about your grandparents?

G: It was strange, they didn't tell too much. We had an awful lot of company at the ranch and always a lot going on but they didn't seem to talk about their childhood too much.

E: Now, your grandparents are the people who bought the property in Occidental?

G: Yes.

E: And that was how many acres?

G. Altogether? Originally close to 600.

E: For the record, your grandparents were Nelson and Margaret (Leary) Drago.

G: Yes, my father was Frank, mother was Agnes (Glynn) Drago.

E: And your grandmother's name was Margaret .

G: She came from Ireland, he (Nelson) from France (note: according to Sebastopol Cemetery records: Nelson Drago was born in Canada) . As Dragon (name changed to Drago)

G: He was married and lived on the property that was part of the ranch, she was a Morgan. And when he came here.

E: She was a widow? G: Yes he married a widow with 2 children. Aunt Jane and ? They passed away so long ago I don't remember them.

E: Do you remember how long your grandparents lived on that ranch before they died?

G: They lived on the ranch till they passed away and are buried in Sebastopol.  
**(Note: Seb. Cemetery records say: Nelson Drago 1832-1904.  
Margaret Leary Drago 1830/35?-1912.)**

E: Was it your mother or father who inherited the ranch?



G: When my grandfather passed away they divided it up. We had about 175 acres.

E: How many children where there?

G: It went six ways. Counting everyone with grandson.

E: Did Margaret and Nelson have six children or were some from a prior family?

G: Well, (muffled) My father inherited his portion. That is the part we lived on and that house is still there. It had nine bedrooms originally. But it has five or six now. I go there quite often.

E; What road is it on?

G: At the end of Stoetz's Lane at the top of the hill. where Harrison Grade road..you keep going.

E: Your father then ranched.

G: We had cows. Apples, grapes. 11 acres of Gravensteins. chickens. You name it we had it on the ranch. And lots of company, lots of gardening and mother canned so much.

E: Did you sell your grapes to someone to make wine?

G: Yes I can remember we were happy we got \$11 a ton.

E: What kind of grapes did they grow?

G: We had a few muscats and I love them and the rest are the red grapes. We made wine not to sell.

E: In an open tank.

G: A great big open tank. Redwood. Everyone came from the city and took a gallon home. Mayor Rolph came to the house and Mrs. Hail ?(muffled) different people. The Gilroys.

E: Your family was all over the place then, all your aunts and uncles they didn't live out here. Did they live on the other pieces of the ranch or did they sell it?

G: They sold it. My aunt Jane went east. She lived to be 104. Husband 101. I went to visit them in Indiana (when the first moon shot was done (1966?)) What a great life she had. Great gal. Aunt Elly went to near Fresno. Nelson passed away young (Nelson Drago Jr. 1872/76?-1924) he was my favorite uncle. And Jack was a character. Neither one of them married. Nelson was engaged and built a new house. To a lady in San Francisco and she had a daughter, 12, and



she managed to get it all in her name before they got married and she left. He was so handsome and he was so nice.

E: And she took away his house. ? The property got put in her name?

G: No all the bank accounts. It broke his heart. He never got over that. So many were gone by the time I was born in 1917. By the time I was old enough to realize what was what... but we had loads of pictures, a lot got lost. I have a book back east. Some tapes. And some of the books I loaned out and people didn't return them.

E: What kind of tapes. Audio tape?

G: Years and years ago.

E: You grew up on the ranch. Where did you go to school?

G: Occidental, the old original Occidental school. The best part is my teacher that I had for 8 years. and my brother had for 7, has moved from Fresno here to Santa Rosa and she is 97.

E: Have you talked to her recently?

G: I talk to her all the time. I send her a card every holiday. She still has some family here up the river, Robertsons, Welchs.

E: She must be in pretty good shape for 97.

G: She drives now.

(discussion of teacher)

E: Going to school we used to take the teacher home overnight. That was great. We didn't have electric in those days. I had my brother, Dave. I thought my gosh if my brother would just marry my teacher. What happened was she married my brother's best friend, George Galpin (sp?) George passed away.

E: She must have been a very young woman as a teacher. A teenager? It was a one room school? How many students?

G: 20 maybe, all grades. We'd take our shoes off and put them by the stove to dry them to walk home. It was 2 miles from the house to the school.

E: After you finished grade school did you move on to high school?

G: We moved to Graton to a new house. Can you imagine moving into a 3 bedroom from a big ranch. My parents sent us to visit relatives while the move was on. I came home and had this little tiny bedroom. It was brand new but it wasn't the ranch. We had 3-4 acres in Graton with peach trees.



E: Did they (your parents) sell the ranch at that point?

G: Yes. I forget who bought it.

E: So you lived in Graton.

G: Went to Analy H.S. from there, graduated. My brother graduated from Analy. Dave, my older brother, did very well. Shipping, during the war. He invested. I also have a brother in Geyserville. I wanted a puppy. I asked my mother for a puppy and she gave me a brother. (Lloyd)

(Mention of Lloyd brings up talk about Drago family plot in Sebastopol Cemetery because Georgetta had Lloyd spruce up the plot)

E: What did you do after high school?

G: Many things.

E: Did you work.

G: Yeah sure, always worked.

E: How long was it before you got married?

G: I worked in San Francisco. Worked for the Doles. Living in St. Francis Woods. Mr. Dole was high potentate of the Shriners. They had two daughters. Lived at 200 Santa Clara. They let me drive the car and take the girls. I was what they called the second girl. Mrs. Dole was wonderful to me. I came back to be at the River in the summer and went back there in the fall. Then I married I lived in Santa Rosa. Had a good life. War came along and things changed.

E: What did your husband do for work?

G: Well at that time he was with (muffled) we divorced. Five years I was married. He was the father of my children. I have two boys and a girl. Randy writes and produces plays, Larry has worked 17 years at Memorial. My daughter is in Healdsburg and she's an artist.

E: You lived in Santa Rosa during those years when your children were growing up?

G: Yes, I retired I've lived here (Windsor) since I was 62. I've been here 13 years.

E: Through your years of raising children, did you have hobbies or other interests?



G: I painted, I had watercolors in the State Fair when I was a kid. But Mylette (artist-daughter Mylette Welch) is the artist.

G: My hobby is writing. E: Tell me about it.

G: I write letters, I write all kinds of things, thank you letters. letters to the editors..to companies who have newsletters and they print my letters.

(discussion of writing)

The kids all graduated from Analy and grade schools in Sebastopol.

(discussion of her children and their activities )

My mother was born and raised in San Francisco and until she was about 6 or 7 and moved to Coleman Valley and she graduated from that little Coleman Valley School. Her maiden name was Agnes Glynn. They married in 1900, I think. They had the baby. He passed away when he was 9 months old. We have pictures of him. Dave was born. They lost Harold(?) then (came) me and my brother Lloyd.

E: Tell me things about your mother, what you remember, what kind of personality did she have?

G: My mom, well she had the bluest eyes, brown hair, curly and she loved to cook and worked hard on the ranch. She was up for Queen of the Rose Parade and she won yardage, that was her prize (shows picture) She could bake like crazy (E: And under terrible circumstances cause you had to use wood stoves) and she canned and worked so hard on the ranch. We raised everything. You just bought flour and beans and things and you ran a bill every 6 months in those days. I liked the ranch. Dave and Lloyd left early, but I've always liked the ranch.

E: Tell me about your father a little bit. What was he like?

G: My dad. people worked on the ranch, baling hay and stuff like that. Dad was tall and good looking. He and I didn't get along that good. My mother let me do what I wanted. She and I were pals. But he was always stern. He got after me for a lot of things. Once in a while the horse would bite him and I patted the horse "nice horse". We had the horse till I was a sophomore in high school. That was the end of the horse. We raised dairy cows, Sent the cream to Bodega. Mom had a little card club. We had so much company.

E: How did people get to the ranch from the Bay area?

G: Drive on old roads in those days. In the summer we even had tents out they would stay. We had a lot of fun, everyone would sing in the evening. And cook, oh gosh. Momma got ready every week for all these people on the weekends. I used to think oh gosh I don't want it that way when I..She worked awfully hard.



You have to take care of all those lamps and everything. Of course some of the hired men cut the wood. We had a big fireplace. The people who came from the city always took lots home. But when they came they brought a lot of things we didn't have too. Popcorn, pomegranates, oranges, peanuts, watermelon.

(misc.discussion) I love to travel. I tried out to get on the plane (stewardess) but I was too tall. A friend got on, she was short. I envied her.

E: You worked at Montgomery Ward's in San Francisco 20 years.?

G: I did bookkeeping for many people, shopping and taking them to doctors, whatever I could do.

E: You were a widow? When did your second husband die?

G: No we divorced. Two down.

E: You **were** on your own to make a living for your children then!

(comments on family, husbands)

end of tape